

# **State of Utah Climate Science Report Process Protocol**

This protocol describes the process by which the Climate Science Report is developed to ensure that the report presents a consensus view and is independent and objective while achieving a high standard of scientific and technical quality. This process is derived from the National Academy of Sciences study process. The Climate Science Report will have four major stages: 1) defining the study, 2) selecting the science panel, 3) drafting the report, and 4) reviewing the report.

## **Stage 1: Defining the Study**

The study is defined by the report outline approved by the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC). The outline is included in a statement of work for the University of Utah to conduct the study. The statement of work bounds the scope of the study and serves as the basis for determining the expertise and appropriate range of perspectives needed from the panel of scientists.

## **Stage 2: Selecting the Science Panel**

Careful steps are necessary to ensure the team is independent and objective. The following criteria will be used in identifying panel members:

An appropriate range of expertise for the task. The panel must include experts with the specific expertise and experience needed to address the study's statement of work.

A broad range of perspectives for the task. The goal is to ensure that a broad range of perspectives are represented so that the panel can carry out its charge objectively and credibly.

The study leader will be Dr. Jim Steenburgh, Chair of the Department of Meteorology, University of Utah. Dr. Steenburgh will nominate a panel of scientists that will be approved by the Department of Environmental Quality.

## **Stage 3: Drafting the Report**

The science panel can use several approaches to gather information including the submission of information by outside parties, reviews of the scientific literature, and investigations of the panel members. In all cases, efforts are made to solicit input from experts who have been directly involved in, or who have special knowledge of, climate research.

## **Stage 4: Report Review**

The review process is structured to ensure that the report addresses its approved study charge and does not go beyond it, that the report draws from original, peer reviewed research, that the report

provides a perspective of the certainty/uncertainty of the findings, that the exposition and organization are effective, and that the report represents the consensus view of the panel.

The DEQ will perform the technical review of the report to ensure that the study meets the statement of work and that it does not go beyond its charge, that it represents the consensus view of the panel, and that it frames the findings in terms of their certainty/uncertainty. The panel will respond to DEQ technical review comments in a detailed “response to review”. Changes needed to meet the study definition will be made by the panel, but will not compromise the scientific merit of the report. The content will remain the responsibility of the panel.

The Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) and BRAC shall review the report, in turn, for readability and clarity. The panel will respond to SWG and BRAC review comments in a detailed “response to review” that is examined by DEQ to ensure that issues of readability and clarity have been adequately addressed.

After all panel members and DEQ have signed off on the report and revisions, it will be released to the SWG and the BRAC for inclusion in the full report to the Governor.